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# A polymorphism of the interleukin-1 beta gene influences survival in pancreatic cancer

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# Phosphorylation of the voltage-gated potassium channel Kv2.1 by AMP-activated protein kinase regulates membrane excitability

Naoko Ikematsu<sup>a,1</sup>, Mark L. Dallas<sup>b,1</sup>, Fiona A. Ross<sup>a</sup>, Ryan W. Lewis<sup>c</sup>, J. Nicole Rafferty<sup>c</sup>, Jonathan A. David<sup>c</sup>, Rakesh Suman<sup>b</sup>, Chris Peers<sup>b,1</sup>, D. Grahame Hardie<sup>a,1,2</sup>, and A. Mark Evans<sup>c,1</sup>

<sup>a</sup>College of Life Sciences, University of Dundee, Dundee, DD1 5EH, United Kingdom; <sup>b</sup>School of Medicine, University of Leeds, Leeds, LS2 9JT, United Kingdom; and <sup>c</sup>College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, EH8 9XD, United Kingdom

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Firing of action potentials in excitable cells accelerates ATP turnover. The voltage-gated potassium channel Kv2.1 regulates action potential frequency in central neurons, whereas the ubiquitous cellular energy sensor AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK) is activated by ATP depletion and protects cells by switching off energy-consuming processes. We show that treatment of HEK293 cells expressing Kv2.1 with the AMPK activator A-769662 caused hyperpolarizing shifts in the current–voltage relationship for channel activation and inactivation. We identified two sites (S440 and S537) directly phosphorylated on Kv2.1 by AMPK and, using phosphospecific antibodies and quantitative mass spectrometry, show that phosphorylation of both sites increased in A-769662-treated cells. Effects of A-769662 were abolished in cells expressing Kv2.1 with S440A but not with S537A substitutions, suggesting that phosphorylation of S440 was responsible for these effects. Identical shifts in voltage gating were observed after introducing into cells, via the patch pipette, recombinant AMPK rendered active but phosphatase-resistant by thiophosphorylation. Ionomycin caused changes in Kv2.1 gating very similar to those caused by A-769662 but acted via a different mechanism involving Kv2.1 dephosphorylation. In cultured rat hippocampal neurons, A-769662 caused hyperpolarizing shifts in voltage gating similar to those in HEK293 cells, effects that were abolished by intracellular dialysis with Kv2.1 antibodies. When active thiophosphorylated AMPK was introduced into cultured neurons via the patch pipette, a progressive, time-dependent decrease in the frequency of evoked action potentials was observed. Our results suggest that activation of AMPK in neurons during conditions of metabolic stress exerts a protective role by reducing neuronal excitability and thus conserving energy.

calcineurin | calcium signaling | energy homeostasis

AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK) is a ubiquitously expressed sensor of cellular energy status (1). It is activated in response to increases in cellular AMP:ATP and ADP:ATP ratios by a mechanism involving allosteric activation and increased net phosphorylation at a conserved threonine (Thr172) mediated by the tumor-suppressor kinase, LKB1 (2). Thr172 phosphorylation and activation also can be triggered by increases in cytoplasmic  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  via the calmodulin-dependent kinase calcium/calmodulin kinase kinase  $\beta$  (CaMKK $\beta$ ) (1, 2). Although AMPK initially was thought to maintain cellular energy homeostasis primarily by regulating metabolism, emerging evidence suggests that it also modulates cell function by phosphorylating other targets, including ion channels. This function may be of particular significance in excitable cells such as central neurons. Remarkably, ATP turnover in rodent brain is comparable with that in human leg muscle during marathon running, and it has been estimated that action potentials account for 25–50% of this turnover, with synaptic transmission (triggered by action potentials) accounting for all but 15% of the remainder (3, 4). Voltage-

gated  $\text{K}^+$  (Kv) channels are crucial determinants of membrane excitability (5), and a major component of the delayed rectifier Kv current in cortical and hippocampal pyramidal neurons, especially in the somatodendritic region where they regulate firing of axonal action potentials, is provided by Kv2.1 (6). Changes in the level of phosphorylation within the cytoplasmic C-terminal tail of Kv2.1 have been proposed to underpin changes in its gating properties and thereby neuronal activity, especially during periods of metabolic stress such as hypoxia or ischemia (7, 8). We therefore investigated the possibility that AMPK might modulate neuronal excitability by direct phosphorylation and regulation of Kv2.1.

## Results

**AMPK Activation Causes Shifts in Voltage Dependence of Kv2.1 Gating.** HEK293 cells stably expressing rat Kv2.1 (8) were treated with the AMPK activator A-769662 (9, 10), which caused maximal phosphorylation of acetyl-CoA carboxylase (ACC), a marker for AMPK activation, at 200  $\mu\text{M}$  within 10 min (Fig. S1). Under these conditions A-769662 caused pronounced hyperpolarizing shifts in the current–voltage relationship for Kv2.1 activation and inactivation (Fig. 1A), with half-maximal steady-state activation ( $G_{0.5}$ ) shifting from  $+15 \pm 1.7$  to  $-15 \pm 1.9$  mV (mean  $\pm$  SEM), and half-maximal steady-state inactivation ( $V_{0.5}$ ) shifting from  $-30 \pm 0.9$  to  $-52 \pm 0.7$  mV. These effects were abolished by preincubation with compound C. Although it is not a fully selective inhibitor of AMPK (11), reversal of the effects by compound C supports the view that A-769662 modifies Kv2.1 function by activating AMPK. It also was notable that the shifts in steady-state activation and inactivation were accompanied by increases in the rates of activation and inactivation (Fig. S2). These initial observations supported our hypothesis that AMPK reduces neuronal excitability by modulating Kv2.1 function.

**AMPK Phosphorylates Kv2.1 at S440 and S537.** To examine whether AMPK directly phosphorylates Kv2.1, we immunoprecipitated Kv2.1 from the HEK293 cells, treated with recombinant protein phosphatase (PP1 $\gamma$ ) and then incubated with or without purified AMPK and [ $\gamma$ - $^{32}\text{P}$ ]ATP. We observed AMPK-dependent phos-

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The authors declare no conflict of interest.

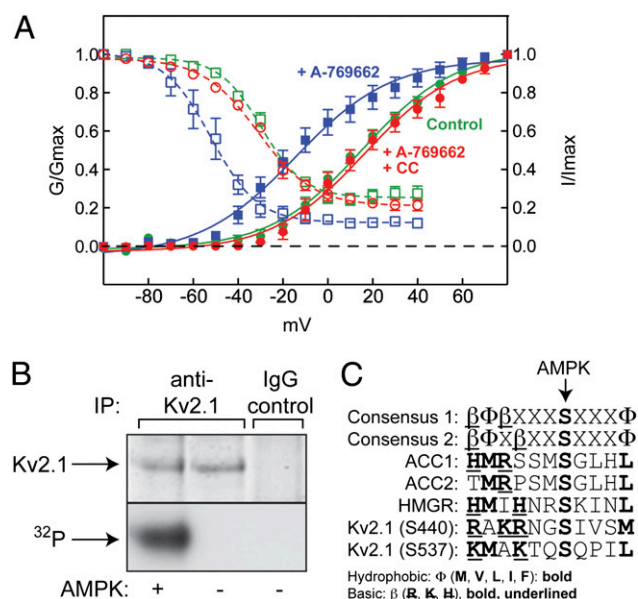
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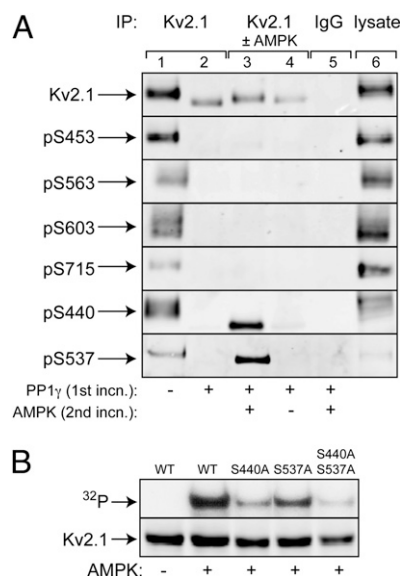
<sup>1</sup>N.I., M.L.D., C.P., D.G.H., and A.M.E. contributed equally to this work.

<sup>2</sup>To whom correspondence should be addressed. E-mail: d.g.hardie@dundee.ac.uk.

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**Fig. 1.** Effects of A-769662 on Kv2.1 function in HEK293 cells and phosphorylation of Kv2.1 by AMPK in cell-free assays. (A) HEK293 cells stably expressing rat Kv2.1 (8) were incubated with A-769662 (100  $\mu$ M)  $\pm$  compound C (40  $\mu$ M) for 20 min. Activation is indicated by filled symbols and continuous lines; inactivation is indicated by open symbols and dashed lines. Data points are mean  $\pm$  SEM ( $n = 5-15$ ). Curves were obtained by fitting to the sigmoidal Boltzmann equation. (B) Phosphorylation of Kv2.1 by AMPK in cell-free assays. Proteins were immunoprecipitated from HEK293 cells stably expressing rat Kv2.1 using anti-Kv2.1 or control Ig (IgG), incubated with [ $\gamma$ - $^{32}$ P]ATP  $\pm$  purified AMPK, and SDS gels were analyzed by protein staining (Upper) or autoradiography (Lower). (C) Alignment of the recognition motif for AMPK with sequences around sites on ACC1, ACC2, HMG-CoA reductase (HMGCR), and Kv2.1. Basic and hydrophobic residues involved in recognition by AMPK are marked by bold type and/or underlining.



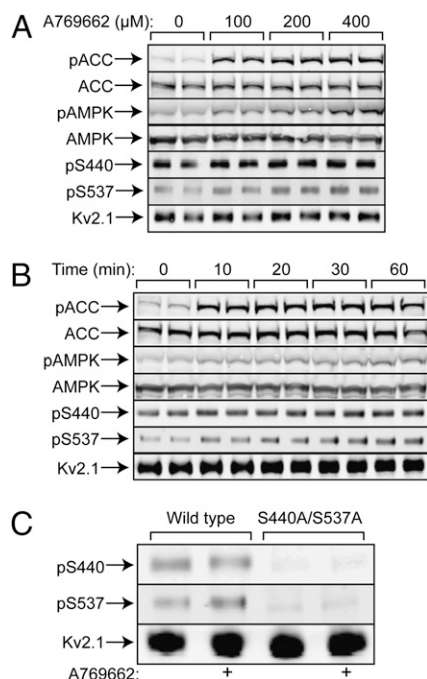
**Fig. 2.** Evidence that S440 and S537 are the major AMPK sites on Kv2.1. (A) Kv2.1 in immunoprecipitates made with anti-Kv2.1 (lanes 1–4) or control IgG (lane 5) or in a cell lysate (lane 6) was probed using anti-Kv2.1 or Kv2.1 phosphospecific antibodies. In lane 2, the immunoprecipitates were treated in a first incubation with phosphatase (PP1 $\gamma$ ), and in lanes 3 and 4 this incubation was followed by a second incubation with ATP with or without AMPK. (B) Kv2.1 immunoprecipitated from cells expressing WT or S440A/S537A single or double mutants. Precipitates were treated with phosphatase PP1 $\gamma$  and then with [ $\gamma$ -<sup>32</sup>P]ATP with or without AMPK.

crease in electrophoretic mobility of Kv2.1, consistent with dephosphorylation, as observed previously (7). After subsequent phosphorylation by AMPK, a small decrease in electrophoretic mobility was detected, but only signals obtained using pS440 and pS537 antibodies were restored (Fig. 2A). This result confirms that S440 and S537, but not S453, S563, S603, or S715, are phosphorylated by AMPK in cell-free assays. That S440 and S537 represent the major AMPK sites was confirmed when we made isogenic HEK293 cells stably expressing WT, S440A, S537A, or S440A/S537A substitutions of rat Kv2.1. The proteins were immunoprecipitated, treated with PP1 $\gamma$ , and incubated with or without AMPK and [ $\gamma$ - $^{32}$ P]ATP, as before. As expected, single S440A or S537A substitutions reduced  $^{32}$ P-labeling of Kv2.1 by AMPK, and a double substitution reduced it even further (Fig. 2B).

**Shifts in Voltage Gating Caused by AMPK Require S440 Phosphorylation.** In cells expressing WT Kv2.1, A-769662 caused phosphorylation (Thr172) and activation of AMPK (shown by phosphorylation of ACC) that was maximal at 100–200  $\mu$ M and 10–20 min. It also increased phosphorylation of Kv2.1 at S440 and S537 (Fig. 3*A* and *B*) but not at S453, S563, S603, or S715 (Fig. S4). Although the effects on S440/S537 phosphorylation were modest, the signals obtained using either antibody were eliminated in cells expressing the double substitution, confirming antibody specificity (Fig. 3*C*). We next assessed the effect of A-769662 on Kv2.1 phosphorylation more quantitatively using stable isotope labeling in culture (SILAC) using  $^{13}\text{C}/^{15}\text{N}$ -labeled lysine/arginine. We identified 17 phosphorylation sites (Table S1), all except four of which had been identified previously (Fig. S3) (8). However, only three showed heavy:light (H:L) ratios  $>1.2$ , indicating increased phosphorylation in response to A-769662. The sites with the highest ratios were S440 (1.3-fold) and S537 (1.4-fold). In a repeat analysis, the H:L ratios for pS440 and pS537 were similar (1.3- and 1.5-fold, respectively).

Next, we analyzed the effects of A-769662 on the gating properties of Kv2.1 in the isogenic cell lines expressing each of



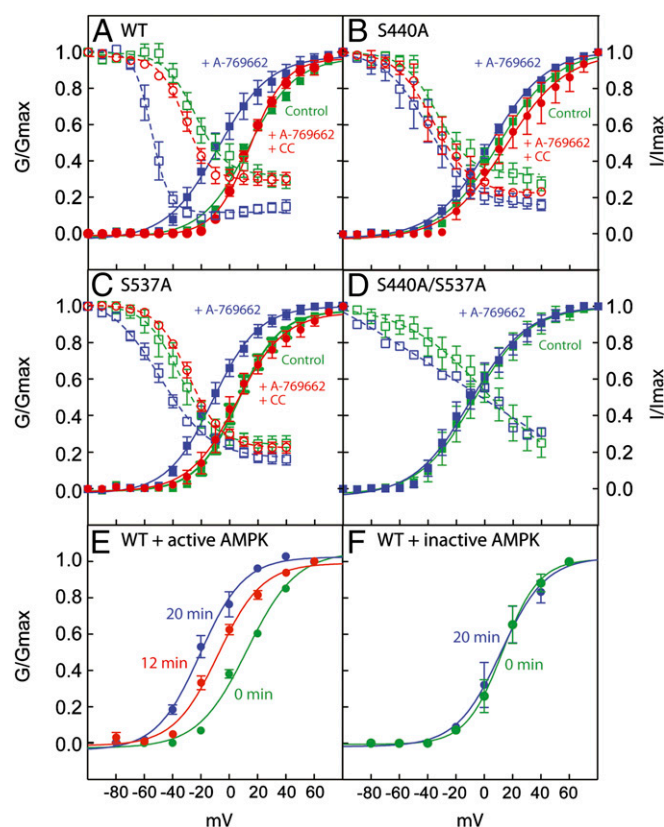


**Fig. 3.** Phosphorylation of ACC, AMPK, and Kv2.1 in response to A-769662 in isogenic HEK293 cells expressing Kv2.1 (duplicate cell incubations). (A) Effect of A-769662 concentration. (B) Time course. (C) Phosphorylation of S440/S537 in cells expressing either WT Kv2.1 or an S440A/S537A double mutant. Panels labeled pACC, pAMPK, pS440, and pS537 are Western blots obtained using appropriate phosphospecific antibodies.

the Kv2.1 variants (Fig. 4 and Table S2). In WT cells a marked hyperpolarizing shift in steady-state activation, blocked by compound C, was observed (Fig. 4A) as seen previously with the independently generated WT cell line (Fig. 1A). This shift was reduced greatly with the S440A substitution (Fig. 4B); a small residual shift might appear to remain but was not statistically significant. For this mutant, effects on channel inactivation mirrored effects on activation; the large shift in  $V_{0.5}$  (31 mV) in response to A-769662 in the WT cells was lost. The S537A substitution caused a small hyperpolarizing shift in activation (relative to WT) in untreated cells [as observed previously (8)], but a further shift of 18 mV in response to A-769662 (blocked by compound C) was still evident. With the double mutant the hyperpolarizing shift produced by A-769662 was abolished, but the mutations alone had a large effect, so that the double mutant had gating properties in untreated cells similar to those in WT after A-769662 treatment.

We also analyzed the effect of AMPK on channel function by applying, by intracellular dialysis via the patch pipette, bacterially expressed human AMPK ( $\alpha 2\beta 2\gamma 1$  complex) that had been activated by thiophosphorylation at Thr172 with CaMKK $\beta$  [thiophosphorylated AMPK is completely resistant to phosphatases (15)] or an identically treated inactive mutant. In general, the results were very similar to those obtained when A-769662 was applied via the extracellular medium. The active AMPK (but not the inactive control) caused a progressive time-dependent hyperpolarizing shift in  $G_{0.5}$  that was half-maximal at 12 min and maximal (33 mV) by 20 min (Fig. 4E and F and Table S3).

**Ionomycin Causes AMPK Activation and Shifts in Voltage Gating That Do Not Involve S440 Phosphorylation.** In HEK293 cells expressing Kv2.1, the  $Ca^{2+}$  ionophore ionomycin induces a hyperpolarizing shift in voltage gating very similar to that caused by A-769662 in this study. However, this shift was proposed to be caused by



**Fig. 4.** Voltage-conductance plots showing effects of AMPK on voltage dependence of activation/inactivation in cells expressing WT or S440A/S537A single/double substitutions. (A–D) Effects of preincubation in the bath with A-769662 (100  $\mu$ M, 20 min)  $\pm$  compound C (40  $\mu$ M). (E and F) Effect of intracellular dialysis with thiophosphorylated active or inactive AMPK introduced via the patch pipette. Individual data points are mean  $\pm$  SEM ( $n = 7–10$ ); results were fitted to the sigmoidal Boltzmann equation, and the curves were generated using the parameters shown in Table S2.

dephosphorylation rather than by increased phosphorylation (8). Because increases in  $Ca^{2+}$  also can activate AMPK by the CaMKK pathway (1), we examined the effects of ionomycin on the phosphorylation of Kv2.1. Ionomycin caused activation of AMPK as assessed by increased phosphorylation of Thr172 on AMPK and its downstream target ACC. Interestingly, this activation was not associated with significant changes in phosphorylation of S440 or S537 on Kv2.1 (Fig. S5A). There was, however, a large dephosphorylation of S603, confirming previous results (8). We also analyzed ionomycin-induced changes in Kv2.1 phosphorylation by SILAC. This analysis revealed that seven sites were dephosphorylated ( $H:L < 0.8$ ; Table S4), three of which (S11, S563, and S603) had been observed previously (8). However, phosphorylation of S440 and S537 was unchanged ( $H:L \sim 1.00$ ). We also tested the effects of ionomycin on voltage gating in cells stably expressing Kv2.1, either WT cells or cells with S440A or S440D substitutions (Fig. S5 and Table S5). The cells with the S440D substitution, but not those with the S440A substitution, exhibited a hyperpolarizing shift of 16 mV relative to the WT cells, consistent with this substitution partially mimicking phosphorylation at S440. Ionomycin caused substantial shifts in gating in WT cells (20 mV) and in cells with the S440A substitution (21 mV) but not in cells with the S440D substitution.

**AMPK Reduces Action Potential Frequency in Hippocampal Neurons.** To examine the relevance of our findings in a more physiological setting, we examined the effect of A-769662 on  $K^+$  currents in



Another question is why ionomycin did not cause S440 and S537 phosphorylation even though it activated AMPK. One explanation is that the pool of AMPK activated by A-769662 is in a subcellular location different from that activated by ionomycin. Interestingly, it has been shown (20) that AMPK activation using 2-deoxyglucose [which uses the classical AMP-dependent pathway (21)] occurs exclusively in the cytoplasm, whereas activation by  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ionophore also occurs in the nucleus.

Kv2.1 is expressed at high levels in the somatic and proximal dendritic regions of central neurons, where it regulates the initiation of axonal action potentials (6). Because of the slow kinetics of Kv2.1 activation and inactivation, it has been argued that hyperpolarizing shifts in voltage dependence would lead to progressive Kv2.1 opening in response to repetitive action potentials and would reduce the firing frequency of axonal action potentials (6). Indeed, glutamate suppresses the frequency of action potentials in cultured rat hippocampal neurons in a manner sensitive to the Kv2.1 inhibitor, hanatoxin (22). Our results show that endogenous Kv2.1 in hippocampal neurons, in which Kv2.1 contributes about half of the delayed rectifier current, is modulated by AMPK in the same manner as in HEK293 cells. Moreover, the introduction of a homogeneous, phosphatase-resistant AMPK via the patch pipette showed that AMPK reduces the firing of action potentials as predicted.

Our findings can be viewed as another illustration of the function of AMPK in conserving energy, in this case serving to protect central neurons against metabolic stress. AMPK-dependent phosphorylation of Kv2.1 may provide, via a  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -independent pathway, a mechanism complementary to that of calcineurin-dependent dephosphorylation that enhances the protection of neurons during periods of cerebral ischemia (7, 8). It also has been shown recently that voltage gating of Kv2.1 is modulated by SUMOylation (23).

Our results show that AMPK facilitates activation of a  $\text{K}^+$  channel and consequent inhibition of neuronal excitability via direct phosphorylation at defined sites. They demonstrate that almost identical effects on Kv2.1 gating can be obtained by increased phosphorylation at S440 or by decreased phosphorylation at other sites mediated by calcineurin. S563 and S603 are the sites likely responsible for the latter effect, because both we and Park, et al. (8) found these sites were dephosphorylated after ionomycin administration, and a double S563A/S603A substitution caused a shift in gating almost as large as that induced by ionomycin (8).

In contrast to the present results, AMPK has been reported to phosphorylate and inactivate other  $\text{K}^+$  channels, including the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -activated  $\text{K}^+$  channels  $\text{K}_{\text{Ca}1.1}$  and  $\text{K}_{\text{Ca}3.1}$  and the pore-forming subunit of the  $\text{K}_{\text{ATP}}$  channel (Kir6.2) (24–27). Our results suggest that AMPK can increase or decrease cell excitability, determined by cell-specific expression of members of the  $\text{K}^+$  channel superfamily. AMPK therefore offers great versatility in its capacity to regulate metabolic status at the cellular and whole body levels.

## Materials and Methods

Sources of proteins, antibodies, and other materials and methods used for cell culture and immunoprecipitation of Kv2.1 from cell extracts are given in [SI Materials and Methods](#).

**Tetracycline-Inducible Stable HEK293 Cell Line Expressing Rat Kv2.1.** HEK293 host cells containing a single flippase recognition target (FRT) site and also independently incorporated pcDNA6/TR (Invitrogen) were transfected with Polyfect (QIAGEN) using the plasmids pOG44 and pcDND5/FRT/TO/Kv2.1 at a ratio of 9:1. Fresh medium was added to the cells 24 h after transfection, and medium containing 200  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$  hygromycin B was added 48 h after transfection. The medium was replaced every 3 d until foci could be identified; then individual foci were selected and expanded. The expression of Kv2.1 was checked using immunofluorescence microscopy and Western blotting using mouse anti-Kv2.1  $\alpha$  subunit antibodies (clone K89/34, NeuroMab).

**In Vitro Phosphorylation of Kv2.1 by AMPK.** Washed immunoprecipitates of recombinant rat Kv2.1 from HEK293 cells were incubated with PP1 $\gamma$  for 20 min at 30 °C, followed by extensive washing with ice-cold lysis buffer and then Hepes buffer [50 mM Na Hepes (pH 7.4), 1 mM DTT]. The precipitate was incubated with 5 mM  $\text{MgCl}_2$ , 200 mM  $[\gamma\text{-}^{32}\text{P}]\text{ATP}$ , 8  $\mu\text{M}$  okadaic acid, with or without AMPK purified from rat liver (28) (5 U/mL in the presence of 200  $\mu\text{M}$  AMP; Fig. 1B) or bacterially expressed AMPK ( $\alpha 2\beta 2\gamma 1$ , 10 U/mL, previously activated using CAMKK $\beta$  and ATP) (15) (Figs. 2–5) for 30 min at 30 °C. After being washed five times with ice-cold Hepes buffer, the proteins were boiled with lithium dodecyl sulfate sample buffer and subjected to Tris-acetate SDS gel electrophoresis (Invitrogen). Incorporation of  $^{32}\text{P}$  was determined as described previously (25). For the experiment shown in Fig. 1D, immunoprecipitates were incubated with unlabeled ATP in place of  $[\gamma\text{-}^{32}\text{P}]\text{ATP}$  and were analyzed by Western blotting with anti-Kv2.1 or phosphospecific antibodies as indicated.

**Identification of Phosphorylation Sites by LC-MS/MS.** Lysate (2.8 mg) from HEK293 cells expressing Kv2.1 was immunoprecipitated with 100  $\mu\text{g}$  of Kv2.1 antibody and then incubated with PP1 $\gamma$  followed by phosphorylation by AMPK as described above, except that  $[\gamma\text{-}^{32}\text{P}]\text{ATP}$  was replaced by unlabeled ATP. The gel was visualized by staining with Colloidal Blue (Invitrogen). The excised gel band was analyzed as described previously (29).

**SILAC.** HEK293 cells were grown for >1 wk in Arg0-, Lys0-, or Arg6/Lys8-labeled DMEM (Dundee Cell Products) containing charcoal-filtered FBS, 100 IU/mL penicillin, 100  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$  streptomycin, and 200  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$  hygromycin B. Tetracycline (100 ng/mL) was added 24 h before treatment. After treatment  $\pm$  200  $\mu\text{M}$  A-769662 for 20 min, lysates were prepared as described above. The labeled and unlabeled lysates were combined 1:1 according to protein content. The pooled lysates was preincubated with protein G-Sepharose for 1 h at 4 °C followed by incubation with anti-Kv2.1 antibody and protein G-Sepharose overnight at 4 °C. The precipitates were subjected to Tris-acetate SDS gel electrophoresis and visualized by Colloidal Blue staining. The sample was analyzed as described above. Before application to the HPLC column, trypsin-digested peptides were purified using a  $\text{TiO}_2$  column (30) to enrich phosphorylated peptides. The raw data were analyzed with MaxQuant software.

**Primary Culture of Hippocampal Neurons.** Hippocampi from 6- to 8-d-old Wistar rats were removed for mechanical and enzymatic dissociation. Tissue was incubated for 15 min at 37 °C in PBS containing 0.25  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$  trypsin (EC 4.4.21.4, from bovine pancreas; Sigma). Trypsin digestion was terminated by the addition of an equal volume of buffer containing 16  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$  soybean trypsin inhibitor (SBTI, type I-S; Sigma), 0.5  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$  DNaseI (EC 3.1.21.1 type II from bovine pancreas; 125 kU/mL; Sigma) and 1.5 mM  $\text{MgSO}_4$ . Following centrifugation at  $1,400 \times g$  for 5 min, cells were resuspended in minimal Earle's medium with 10% FCS, 19 mM KCl, 13 mM glucose, 50 IU/mL penicillin, and 50  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$  streptomycin. One hundred microliters of cell suspension was plated onto poly-L-lysine-coated coverslips (10-mm diameter) in a 24-well plate for electrophysiology. Medium was replaced after 24 h with medium containing 10% (vol/vol) horse serum in place of FCS and 80  $\mu\text{M}$  fluorodeoxyuridine to prevent the proliferation of nonneuronal cells. After 48 h the medium was exchanged for one containing Neurobasal medium, supplemented with 2% B-27, 1% penicillin/streptomycin, 0.5 mM L-glutamine, and 25  $\mu\text{M}$  L-glutamic acid. Cells were maintained in a humidified incubator at 37 °C, 95% air/5%  $\text{CO}_2$  for 14 d, with medium replaced every 5–7 d. All experiments were performed with cells cultured for 5–14 d.

**Electrophysiology. HEK293 cells.** Fragments of coverslip with attached Kv2.1-expressing HEK293 cells were transferred to a recording chamber, perfused at 3–5 mL/min [10 mM Na Hepes (pH 7.2), 140 mM NaCl, 5 mM KCl, 2 mM  $\text{MgCl}_2$ , 2 mM  $\text{CaCl}_2$ , 10 mM glucose], and mounted on the stage of an Olympus CK40 inverted microscope.  $\text{K}^+$  currents were recorded by whole-cell patch clamp and evoked by a series of depolarizing steps from  $-90$  to  $+80$  mV in 10-mV increments for 500 ms. Recordings were at 37 °C unless otherwise indicated. Patch pipettes had resistances of 4–6 M $\Omega$ . Series resistance was monitored and compensated (60–80%) after achieving the whole-cell configuration. If a significant (>20%) increase occurred during the recording, the experiment was terminated. The pipette solution consisted of 10 mM Na Hepes (pH 7.2), 140 mM KCl, 5 mM EGTA, 2 mM  $\text{MgCl}_2$ , 1 mM  $\text{CaCl}_2$ , and 10 mM, glucose. For some experiments a thiophosphorylated AMPK complex ( $\alpha 2\beta 2\gamma 1$ , 2 U/mL) (15) was added to the pipette solution. The control was identical except for a D157A mutation in  $\alpha 1$  to render the kinase inactive and was added at the same concentration. Conductance values (G) were calculated from the equation  $G = I/(V - E_{\text{K}})$ , where the Nernst equilibrium potential  $E_{\text{K}}$  was calculated as  $-89$  mV at 37 °C. Normalized con-



ductance/voltage profiles for the Kv2.1 channel were fitted to a single Boltzmann function with the form  $G = G_{\max}/(1 + \exp[-(V - V_{1/2})/k])$ , where  $G_{\max}$  is the maximal conductance,  $V_{1/2}$  is the test potential at which Kv2.1 channels have a half-maximal conductance ( $G_{0.5}$ ), and  $k$  represents the slope of the activation curve. Signals were sampled at 10 kHz and low-pass filtered at 2 kHz. Voltage-clamp and analysis protocols were performed using an Axopatch 200A amplifier/Digidata 1200 interface controlled by Clampex 9.0 software (Molecular Devices). Off-line analysis was performed using Clampfit 9.0 (Molecular Devices).

**Hippocampal neurons.** For voltage-clamp experiments, the protocol was similar to that used for the HEK293 cells except for the inclusion of a single 30-ms prepulse to  $-10$  mV to inactivate transient  $K^+$  currents; the neurons also were held at  $-70$  mV. Signals were sampled at 10 kHz and low-pass filtered at 2 kHz. For some experiments, an anti-Kv2.1 antibody (Neuromab) was added to the intracellular solution to give a final concentration of  $0.5 \mu\text{g/mL}$ . Action potential recordings were made in whole-cell current-clamp mode at  $37^\circ\text{C}$ . Signals were low-pass filtered at 1 kHz and sampled at 10 kHz. Action potentials were evoked by 1-s current pulses ( $50$ – $200$  pA) at  $0$  and  $10$  min. Additionally, action potentials were evoked every 2 min during the experi-

ments with a  $100$ -pA current pulse. Patch electrodes ( $3$ – $5$  M $\Omega$ ) contained  $11$  mM K Hepes (pH  $7.2$ ),  $117$  mM KCl,  $10$  mM NaCl,  $11$  mM EGTA,  $2$  mM  $\text{Na}_2\text{ATP}$ ,  $2$  mM  $\text{MgCl}_2$ ,  $1$  mM  $\text{CaCl}_2$ , and  $0.3$  mM  $\text{NaGTP}$ . Perfusate contained  $117$  mM NaCl,  $4.5$  mM KCl,  $2.5$  mM  $\text{CaCl}_2$ ,  $1$  mM  $\text{MgCl}_2$ ,  $23$  mM  $\text{NaHCO}_3$ , and  $11$  mM glucose and was bubbled with mixed gas ( $95\%$  air/ $5\%$   $\text{CO}_2$ ; pH  $7.4$ ). In some experiments a thiophosphorylated AMPK complex ( $\alpha 2\beta 2\gamma 1$ ) or a D157A inactive control was added to the patch pipette at a concentration of  $2$  U/mL or the equivalent concentration for the inactive mutant (15). Action potential parameters were measured off-line from the first action potential generated in response to a  $100$ -pA stimulus, using Clampfit 9.0 (Molecular Devices). Firing frequency was determined from the interspike interval between the first two action potentials.

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